

**MINUTES OF THE FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE HELD ON
27TH JUNE, 2017**

Present: Councillors Mrs S Forster (Chair) and R Arthur, Mrs J A Bell, Mrs G Bleasdale, Mrs K Brace, S P Colborn, Mrs R M Gratton, G N Hepworth, Mrs L Kennedy, T Shepherd, B Taylor, R Whitehead, Miss L Willis.

Apologies: Councillors E Bell, S Cudlip, D Cummings, Mrs V Cummings, Ms S Pratt, K Shaw

Prior to commencement of the meeting the Chair advised members of this Committee and members of the public that in line with the amendment to 'the public bodies (admission to meetings) act 1960', which came into force in August, 2014, parts of this meeting may be recorded by photographic, video and audio means.

1. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS

Members were reminded prior to the start of the meeting of the need to disclose any interests, prejudicial or personal, in accordance with the Code of Conduct.

2. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING HELD ON 30th MAY, 2017

RECOMMENDED the Minutes of this meeting, a copy of which had been previously printed and circulated to each Member, be approved and signed as a correct record by the Chairman.

3. PAYSHEET NUMBER 3 - 2017/18

a) Expenditure

RECOMMENDED:

- (i) that all payments in Paysheet Number 3 – 2017/18 be approved, it being noted that the direct debits, BACS and cheque payments including Imprest expenditure amount to £180,117.07 being the total sum authorised under this Paysheet;
- (ii) that the BACS authorisation sheet be signed by three Members and the credit transfers be actioned immediately;
- (iii) that the cheques relating to suppliers not being paid by BACS be signed by three Members and the payments be released immediately; and
- (iv) that the Clerk's Imprest Account be reimbursed the sum of £2,855.32 for Civic Expenditure and authority be granted for this to be signed by the Chairman and Responsible Financial Officer.

b) **Income**

RECOMMENDED the summary sheet showing the range of income received by the Council during the current month be accepted.

4. **BANK BALANCES**

RECOMMENDED the report of the Finance Officer a copy of which was circulated, be approved.

5. **AUGUST RECESS PAYMENT**

RECOMMENDED in accordance with usual practice, formal authority be granted to constitute an August Recess Paysheet Sub-Committee comprising the Mayor, Deputy Mayor, Chair and Vice-Chair of this Committee and two additional Councillors, and they be authorised to agree and issue the August Recess Paysheet subject to details being reported for information purposes to the September meeting.

6. **QUARTERLY BUDGETARY REVIEW FOR QUARTER ENDED JUNE 2017**

The Committee considered the quarterly budgetary review for the quarter ended 30th June, 2017.

RECOMMENDED the Council accept the budgetary review statements for the quarter ended 30th June, 2017.

7. **SEAHAM TOWN HALL – BOOKINGS**

The Committee considered the schedule of bookings for the Town Hall for June, 2017.

RECOMMENDED the Council note the bookings made at Seaham Town Hall for June, 2017.

8. **THEFT OF COUNCIL VEHICLE**

The Deputy Town Clerk informed the Council that the stolen vehicle had now been found by the Police. It was reported that the vehicle had not been locked in a secure compound as the vehicle was being used for on-call weekend work. A Member questioned whether the vehicle was covered under the insurance as it was not locked in the compound to which the Deputy Town Clerk advised that the vehicle was still covered under the Councils insurance policy.

A Member questioned whether the Council vehicles should be fitted with tracking devices. It was also requested by a Member that Council logos are placed on all of the Council vehicles.

RECOMMENDED that the tracking devices be fitted to all Council vehicles and all vehicles have Seaham Town Council logos applied to them at all times.

9. MODULAR BUILDINGS FROM WEST HARTLEPOOL RUGBY CLUB

The Deputy Town Clerk informed the meeting that the Rugby Club are no longer interested in placing a modular building at New Drive.

A Member stated that other existing buildings should be used more such as the Leisure Centre. The Deputy Town Clerk stated that the Town Council have no control over buildings or land that is not owned by the Town Council.

RECOMMENDED that the Council note the information.

10. AMENDMENT TO POLICIES

RECOMMENDED that 'Any actions by staff or Councillors or the general public that brings the Council into disrepute or damages the reputation of the Council by stating inaccuracies, targeting individuals, negative comments about the Council, its staff or Councillors on the internet, social media, in newsletters, leaflets, posters etc. will be reviewed by the Town Clerk or Deputy Town Clerk or if it is a case to answer by them, the disciplinary panel.

If confirmed to have happened the person in question if a member of staff will have the issue investigated and brought before the disciplinary panel. If it is done by a Councillor this will be reviewed by the Chair and Deputy Chair of the Council (or other chairs of relevant committees if against them) with the assistance of the Town Clerk or Deputy Town Clerk and if proved the Councillor in question may be removed from Council committees, the inaccurate or offensive statements corrected in the public realm and legal action may be brought against them and also in the case of the general public making such statements by the council potentially relating to for example defamation, negligence, data protection, bribery, protection from harassment etc. whether it's on behalf of the council, its staff or Councillors that have been in some way offended or in some way felt a loss such as a reputation loss or loss of respect and dignity etc' be added to the relevant policy immediately and all Councillors to be reissued with an updated copy of the policy.

11. GRASS CUTTING AT EARL HOUSE

It was noted that Greenscape will carry out the grass cutting at Earl House free of charge.

RECOMMENDED that the Council note the information.

12. PRESS OPPORTUNITIES

RECOMMENDED the Council note that no press opportunities existed from this meeting.